

Guardianship Updates from the Indiana Supreme Court - Adult Guardianship Office

Erica C. R. Costello
Staff Attorney, Adult Guardianship Office
Indiana Office of Court Services, Indiana Supreme Court

What is AGO?:

- ▶ Created in 2013, the Adult Guardianship Office (AGO) serves as a resource for courts and the general public on all issues related to adult guardianship.
- ▶ Last year, AGO's budget was increased by the Indiana General Assembly to \$1.5 million/yr. for FY 2017-2019.

AGO's Current Projects:

- ▶ Expansion of Volunteer Advocates for Seniors or Incapacitated Adults (VASIA) Programs
- ▶ Expansion of the Guardianship Registry
- ▶ Development of the “MyIndianaAccounting” (MyINA) Application
- ▶ Implementation of the Indiana Project on Abuse in Later Life
- ▶ Planning and Implementation of the 2017 Focus WINGS Project on Supported Decision-Making

Expansion of VASIA Programs:

- ▶ Last year, AGO awarded over **\$900,000** in funding to **15 VASIA programs**, currently serving in **34 counties**.
- ▶ Number of Current Clients Served: **589**
- ▶ Number of Active Volunteers: **259**
- ▶ Number of Volunteer Hours Last Qtr.: **2,613**

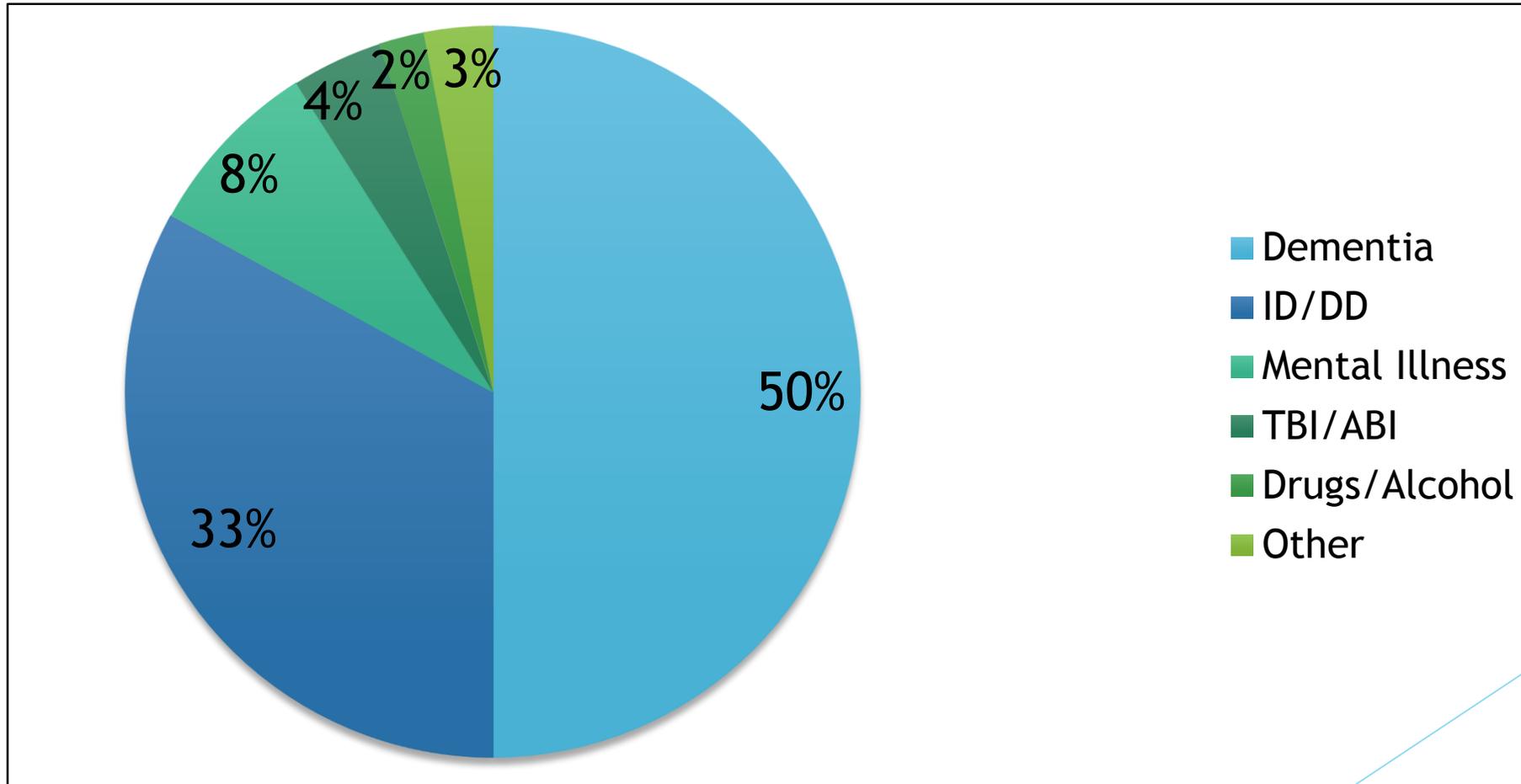
2018 VASIA Grant Applications

- ▶ We recently received 18 VASIA applications from agencies seeking to provide guardianship services in 42 counties throughout Indiana.
- ▶ If approved, the new counties would include: Bartholomew, Benton, Crawford, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Randolph, and Tipton Counties.
- ▶ Our office's grant review committee has reviewed all of the 2018 grant applications and we are currently awaiting the approval of our recommendations by the Chief Justice.

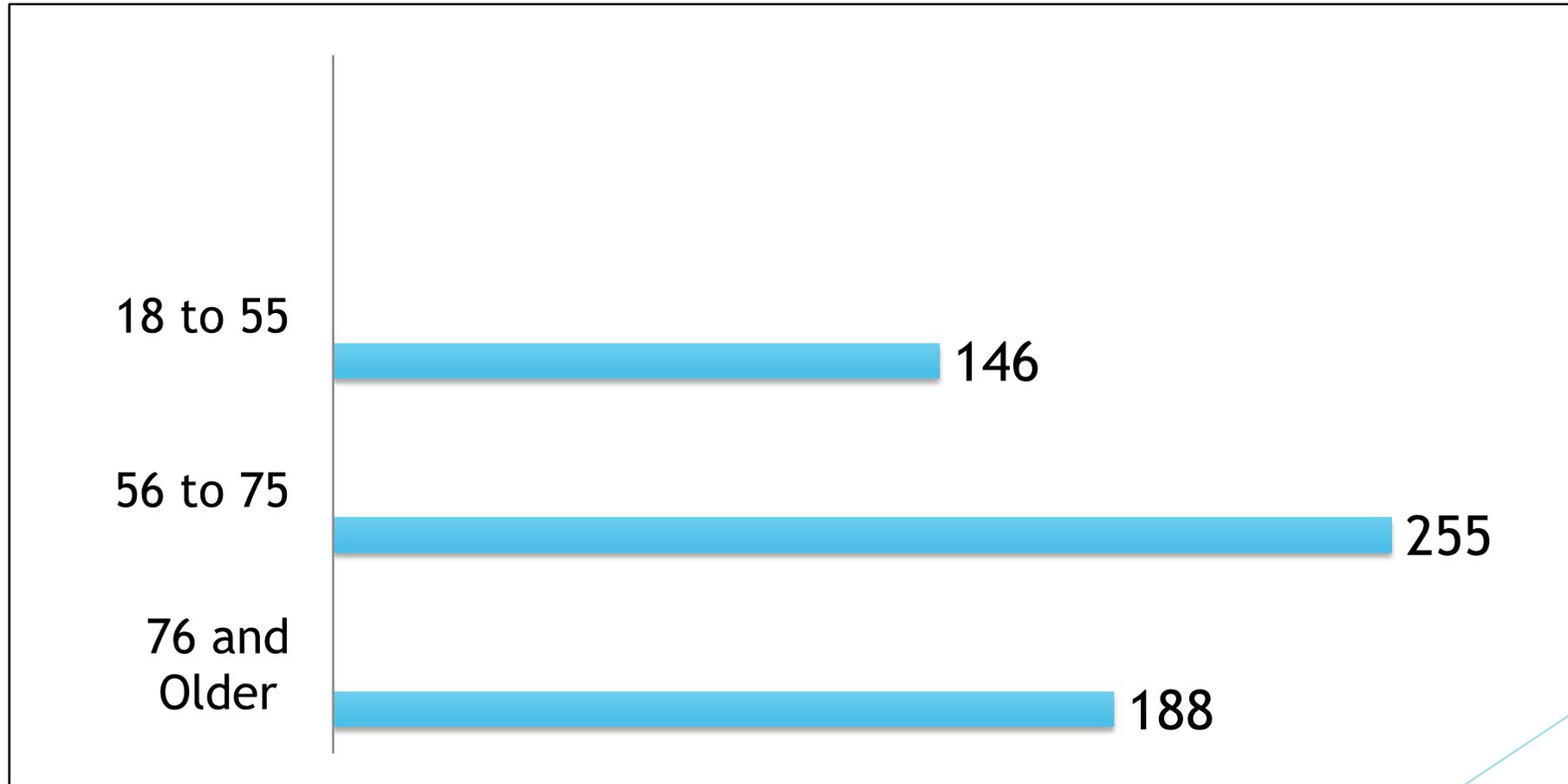
Current Counties With VASIA Programs (See “Program List” Handout):

Adams	Henry	Montgomery	Tippecanoe
Allen	Johnson	Noble	Union
Clark	Kosciusko	Orange	Vanderburgh
Dearborn	Lake	Owen	Warrick
DeKalb	LaPorte	Perry	Washington
Elkhart	Lawrence	Porter	Wayne
Fayette	Marion	Posey	Wells
Franklin	Marshall	Spencer	
Gibson	Monroe	St. Joseph	

Current VASIA Client Impairments:



Current Age of VASIA Clients:

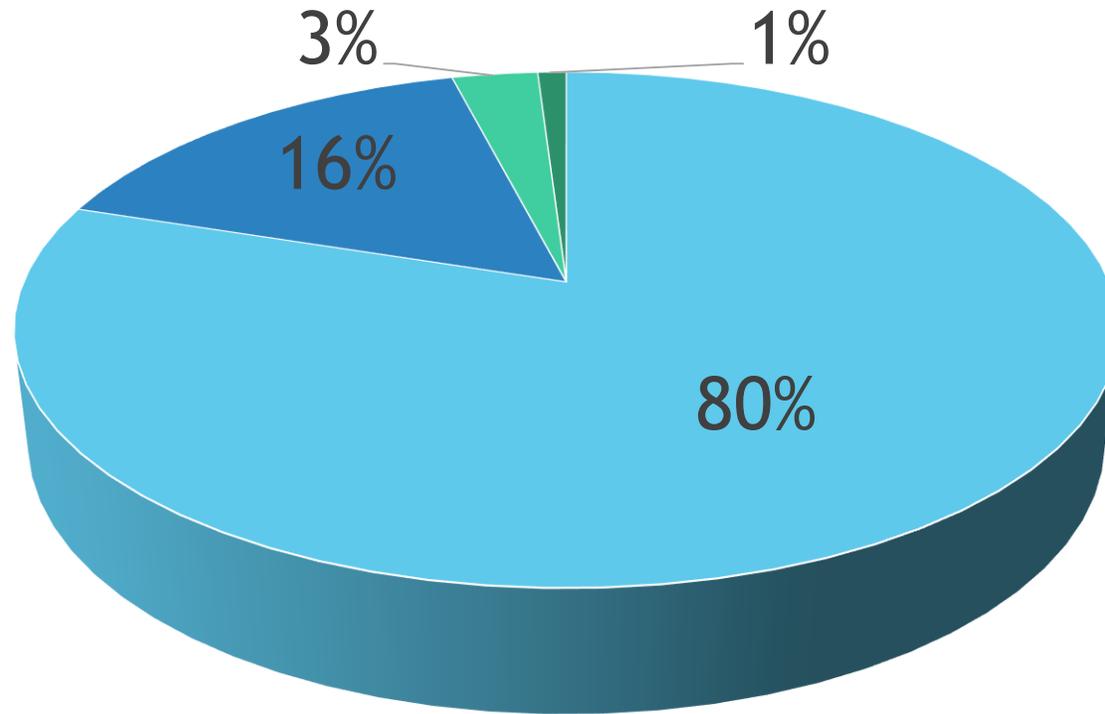


Current Gender of VASIA Clients:

Males: 303 (51%)

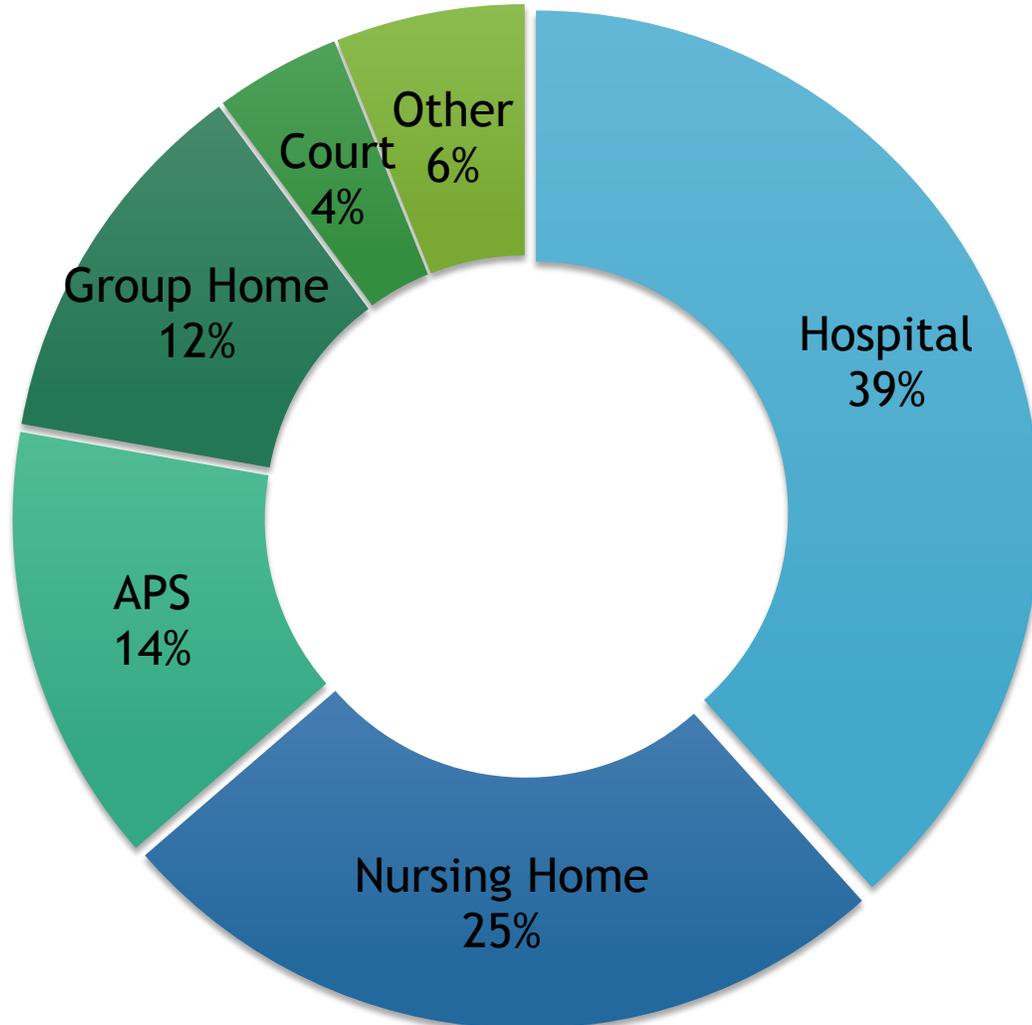
Females: 286 (49%)

Current Race of VASIA Clients:



■ White/Non-Hispanic ■ Black/African America ■ Hispanic/Latino ■ Other

Current VASIA Referral Sources:



Guardianship Registry:

- ▶ The registry is an important tool for courts—tracking the number and types of adult and minor guardianship cases filed in each participating jurisdiction.
- ▶ It also provides a public website for people to check on the status of active guardianship cases:
<https://public.courts.in.gov/GRP/>
- ▶ As of December 2017, 55 counties are participating on the registry.

Guardianship Registry (Cont.):

- ▶ Beginning on January 1, 2018, the “Guardianship Registry Information Sheet” is required to be filed with all guardianship petitions per Indiana Court Rule.
- ▶ The information sheet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/judiciary/iocs/files/ad-guard-registryinfosheet.pdf> (see also “Guardianship Registry Information Sheet” handout).

MyIndiana Accounting (MyINA) Application:

- ▶ In January of 2016, Indiana was selected as one of five states to receive a technical assistance grant through the National Center for State Courts (NCSC).
- ▶ MyINA will allow guardians to submit inventories and accountings to the court.
- ▶ The software will also test for “red flags” indicative of financial mismanagement or exploitation.
- ▶ After development and testing, MyINA will be piloted in Marion and Elkhart Counties.

The Indiana Project on Abuse in Later Life (INPALL):

- ▶ INPALL is a 3-year, \$339,000, federally funded demonstration project sited in St. Joseph County, Indiana.
- ▶ Its purpose is to develop and enhance the delivery of services to older adult victims of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation (including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking).

Who Are The INPALL Partners?:

- ▶ Indiana Supreme Court, Office of Judicial Administration
- ▶ St. Joseph Superior Court
- ▶ St. Joseph County Prosecutor's Office
- ▶ Family Justice Center of St. Joseph County
- ▶ REAL Services, Inc.
- ▶ St. Joseph County Police Department
- ▶ Mishawaka Police Department
- ▶ South Bend Police Department

What INPALL Has Accomplished?:

- ▶ Conducted a “Cross-Training Kickoff Event” with INPALL partners to raise awareness to the issue of abuse in later life.
- ▶ Conducted community training events for law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim services providers on abuse in later life.
- ▶ Conducted a community needs assessment to determine the services needed for victims of abuse in later life.

INPALL Accomplishments (Cont.):

- ▶ Created an “Abuse in Later Life Case Manager” position at the Family Justice Center of St. Joseph County.
- ▶ Provided funding to support victims of abuse in later life with housing, transportation, and guardianship services, as needed.
- ▶ Created a “Community Coordinated Response (CCR)” group to assist with project activities and develop written protocols on responding to abuse in later life.

The Future of INPALL:

- ▶ Provide better services for vulnerable adults living in St. Joseph County.
- ▶ Develop coordinated and collaborative responses to the growing, yet complex, problem of abuse in later life.
- ▶ Replicate the model that we develop in St. Joseph County in other counties throughout the state.

2017 FOCUS WINGS Project on Supported Decision-Making:

- ▶ **Goal:** To develop a county-level judicial reform project that reduces the need for guardianship using supported decision-making.
- ▶ **Objectives:**
 - ▶ 1) To create a community education component, explaining the process of supported decision-making;
 - ▶ 2) To develop pre-adjudication of guardianship screening tools for cases involving alleged incapacitated adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities;
 - ▶ 3) To develop a case referral and management delivery model for cases referred to the project by the Court; and
 - ▶ 4) To develop a training component for judges and pro bono attorneys/GALs regarding the process of supported decision-making.

WINGS SDM Project (Cont.):

▶ Project Stakeholders include:

- ▶ The Honorable Gregory Horn, Wayne County Superior Court
- ▶ Achieva Resources, Inc.
- ▶ Indiana Disability Rights
- ▶ The ARC of Indiana
- ▶ The Indiana Division of Disabilities and Rehabilitative Services
- ▶ The Indiana Division of Aging
- ▶ The University of Notre Dame
- ▶ The WINGS/Adult Guardianship State Task Force

WINGS SDM Project (Cont.):

▶ Planning Phase (June - December 2017)

- ▶ Meet regularly with the project stakeholders to work on the development, training, and implementation of the project.
- ▶ Develop SDM agreements and screening forms for judges.
- ▶ Conduct training on the project for judges, pro bono attorneys/GALS, and community members.

▶ Implementation Phase (January - May 2018)

- ▶ Work with the judges and stakeholders to begin rollout of the project in Dec 2017/Jan 2018.
- ▶ Evaluate the project training and rollout.
- ▶ Provide a final report on the project to the American Bar Association.

What's Next?:

- ▶ Continued Expansion of VASIA programs
- ▶ Continued Rollout of the Guardianship Registry
- ▶ Implementation of the MyINA Application
- ▶ “Wrapping Up” the INPALL Project
- ▶ Implementing the 2017 Focus WINGS Grant on Supported Decision-Making
- ▶ Adult Guardianship Symposium (May 17, 2018, Location TBD)

New Address for AGO:

▶ **Contact Information (as of December 11, 2017):**

Erica Costello

Staff Attorney, Adult Guardianship Office

Indiana Supreme Court

251 N. Illinois Street, Suite 800

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Phone: (317) 234-5562

Email: erica.costello@courts.in.gov